

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 33

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 91

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 33—Relative to the Joint Committee on Human Trafficking in California.

[Filed with Secretary of State August 22, 2005.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 33, Lieber. Joint Committee on Human Trafficking in California.

This measure would establish the Joint Committee on Human Trafficking in California, to study and investigate issues relating to human trafficking, which would consist of 5 Assembly Members appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly and 5 Senators appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules. The measure would prescribe the duties and powers of the committee, and would authorize the committee to act until November 30, 2006.

WHEREAS, Human trafficking is pervasive and damaging, yet remains an unrecognized problem facing our country and our state; and

WHEREAS, Human trafficking is present-day slavery, involving the recruitment, transportation, or sale of persons for forced labor, and through the use of violence, threats, and coercion, enslaved persons may be forced to work in the sex trade, domestic labor, factories, hotels or restaurants, agriculture, peddling, or begging; and

WHEREAS, The problem of human trafficking has reached epic proportions, and is the fastest growing criminal industry in the world; and

WHEREAS, The federal government and several states recognize the grave human rights, health, and security implications of human trafficking in the United States and around the world; and

WHEREAS, In 2000, the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (22 U.S.C. Sec. 7101 et seq.) was enacted by the federal government to “combat trafficking in persons, a contemporary manifestation of slavery whose victims are predominantly women and children, to ensure just and effective punishment of traffickers, and to protect their victims”; and

WHEREAS, In June 2004, the United States Department of State reported that 14,500 to 17,500 people are trafficked annually into the United States, having been bought, sold, transported, and held in inhumane conditions for forced use as prostitutes or laborers; and

WHEREAS, California’s port cities have received a particularly high number of victims of trafficking brought over for sexual slavery; and

WHEREAS, Women and children comprise the majority of trafficking victims; the low social status of women in many parts of the world facilitates a thriving trafficking industry; and

WHEREAS, International trafficking victims come predominantly from Asia, Latin America, and Eastern Europe; in their home countries, victims of trafficking commonly experience poverty, oppression, persecution, bonded labor, armed conflict, civil unrest, and lack of opportunity; and

WHEREAS, Domestically, drug and alcohol addicts, the homeless, and runaways are prime targets of traffickers; and

WHEREAS, Members of these vulnerable populations are actively recruited by traffickers, some of whom are connected to organized crime, and trafficking recruiters often mislead victims into believing that the opportunities recruiters offer will bring the victims and their loved ones a better life; and

WHEREAS, Children are not safe from trafficking and exploitation—victims of trafficking report children as young as four years of age being sold into slavery, often for sexual purposes—and in 2001, the United States Department of Justice concluded that between 300,000 and 400,000 American children are victims of sexual exploitation every year, many as young as 11 or 12 years of age, and some even younger; and

WHEREAS, In addition to being forced to work as prostitutes, farmworkers, or maids, victims of human trafficking live daily with inhumane treatment, including physical violence, psychological violence, sexual abuse, food deprivation, sleep deprivation, threats to a victim's family, and destruction of a victim's dignity and self-worth; and

WHEREAS, Traffickers also use techniques such as debt bondage, isolation from the public, and confiscation of passports, visas, or other pieces of identification, to keep victims enslaved; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Joint Committee on Human Trafficking in California is hereby established; and be it further

Resolved, That the Joint Committee on Human Trafficking in California shall consist of 10 members, who shall include five Assembly Members appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly and five Senators appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules; and be it further

Resolved, That the Joint Committee on Human Trafficking in California shall be under the direction of an Assembly Chair, appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly, and a Senate Vice Chair, appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules; and be it further

Resolved, That the joint committee and its members shall have and exercise all of the rights, duties, and powers conferred upon investigating committees and their members by the Joint Rules of the Senate and Assembly as those rules are adopted and amended from time to time, which provisions are incorporated herein and made applicable to the committee and its members; and be it further

Resolved, That the Assembly Committee on Rules may make money available from the Assembly Operating Fund, as it deems necessary, to share expenses of the joint committee and its members; and any expenditure shall be made in compliance with policies set forth by, and

shall be subject to the approval of, the Assembly Committee on Rules; and be it further

Resolved, That the Joint Committee on Human Trafficking in California shall study and investigate issues including, but not limited to, the training of law enforcement agencies regarding trafficking, education efforts on identifying trafficking victims, the coordination among programs serving victims of trafficking, the development of culturally appropriate services, and obtaining better data regarding the number of victims and their locations, especially children; and be it further

Resolved, That the Joint Committee on Human Trafficking in California shall submit a report to the Legislature on September 30, 2006, including its findings and recommendations; and be it further

Resolved, That the Joint Committee on Human Trafficking in California is authorized to act until November 30, 2006.